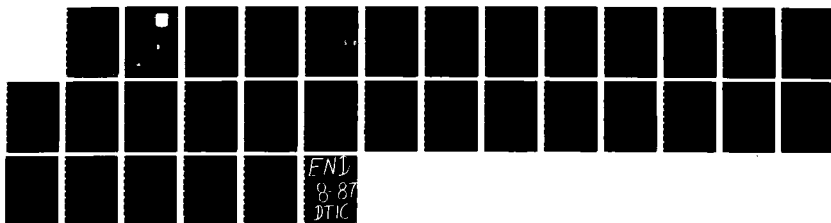


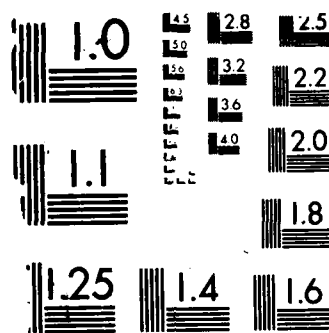
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PROBLEM OF JERUSALEM

BY

LIEUTENANT COLONEL ALAN H. SHERMAN

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PROBLEM OF JERUSALEM

by

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PROBLEM OF JERUSALEM

BACKGROUND

The problem of Jerusalem is in many respects a paradigm of the problem of the Arab-Israeli conflict which has been on-going for the past 37 years. This essay will cover the broad issues that continue to foster conflict between the Israelis and Arab states (including the residents of Jerusalem), and the U.S. policy in the region (including the question of moving the U.S. embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem).

To the Israelis as well as Jews worldwide, it can be said that Jerusalem is the center of their universe. One only need read Psalm 137 for clues to this strong attachment.

If I forget thee, O Jerusalem,
Let my right hand forget her cunning.
Let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth,
If I remember thee not;
If I set not Jerusalem above my chiefest joy.

The Jewish devotion to this Holy City has remained virtually unbroken for over 3000 years. The liturgy, prayers and teachings often incorporate Jerusalem as a major reference point. The Passover Seder service is concluded with the phrase "Next year in Jerusalem", as if to set a self-fulfilling prophesy. Thus it is no surprise that world Jewry becomes very emotional when proposals are made to internationalize the city, and remove it from Israeli control. This position became more positive when on December 5, 1949 David Ben Gurion, the first prime minister of the Jewish state addressed the Knesset (Israel's Parliament) and stated that:

Jerusalem is the heart of hearts of the state of Israel ---
we do not imagine that the United Nations Organization will
try to tear Jerusalem out of the state of Israel, or to pre-
judice Israeli sovereignty in the eternal capital of Israel.¹

This declaration has continued to remain in force, and as far as world

Jewry are concerned, Jerusalem will always continue to remain the capital of the Jewish state. The city, based upon current estimates has 440,000 inhabitants (316,000 Jews, 110,000 Moslem Arabs and 14,000 Christians).²

Since its unification in 1967, Jerusalem still remains a divided city. There is virtually very little social mixing between the Arabs and Jews.³ In the national election virtually all of the Arabs from Jerusalem's annexed areas do not participate in the election, however, approximately 30 per cent of the predominantly male Arab voting population do take part in the Jerusalem municipal elections.⁴

To the Arab world, Jerusalem is only subordinate to Mecca and Medina. Known as al-Quds or the Sanctuary of Islam it has been a Muslim Holy City from the very beginning of Muhammad's calling. For over a thousand years Muslim rule had prevailed over Jerusalem with breaks occurring during the Crusades in 1099, 1229, and when General Allenby expelled the Turks in 1918. During the period 1948-1967 the Muslims ruled East Jerusalem until 7 June 1967 when Major General Moshe Dayan and the Israeli Army liberated Jerusalem. From a historical perspective Islamic traditions incorporate many references to Judaism and Christianity. The journey of Muhammad from Mecca to Jerusalem on a winged horse (al-Buraq) included a stop at Bethlehem where Muhammad stopped to pray at Jesus' birthplace. From Bethlehem he tethered at the opposite side of the Western Wall in Jerusalem which in Arabic is called the Wall of al-Buraq. Most significantly however, is the "farthest Mosque" (al Aqsa Mosque or Solomon's Temple) where he prayed before his ascent to the seventh heaven. The ascension was from a rock commonly referred to as the Dome of the Rock or Mosque of Omar.

These three shrines encompass the Noble Enclosure that is sacred to the Muslim world.⁵

To the Christian world, Jerusalem conveys a very special and unique attachment. Less than a half mile from the Western Wall is the Church of the Holy Sepulchre ordered built by the Christian Emperor Constantine over the place he believed to be the tomb of Jesus. This church also marks the actual site of Calvary.⁶ Nearby is the Cenacle, the site of the Last Supper, and the Garden of Gethsemane where according to St. Luke, Christ frequently retired.⁷ It is not unusual to see teems of pilgrims moving en masse from one shrine to the next under the watchfulness of the Israeli military. The city in every sense of the word is purely international.

EXTERNAL ISSUES

According to Meron Benvenisti, a former Deputy Mayor of Jerusalem, he summarizes the issue quite succinctly:

The Jerusalem question is often defined as an inter-religious dispute. The solution, therefore, lies in granting religious freedom, ensuring free access and establishing extra-territorial status for the holy places. In fact there is no religious dispute between Jew and Muslim over any holy place, nor is there a conflict between both and Christians. The conflict is between Israeli and Arab (Muslim or Christian) over the political control of Jerusalem. Both are ready to grant the other religious freedom provided that they retain political control.

Political strategists have long since argued that Jerusalem can only be dealt with after all other outstanding issues have been solved in the dispute, and that the problem of Jerusalem is only a mirror image of the broader problems facing the warring factions.

On 22 November 1967, the U.N. Security Council unanimously adopted

the British resolution on the Middle East. This resolution commonly referred to as "242" stressed that Israeli forces withdraw from territories occupied in the conflict. U.N. planners assumed at the same time that the occupied territory would revert back to Jordan. It wasn't until some time after 1967 that the Palestinians exercised the issue of self-determination by demanding a country and capital of their own that the real issue began to foment. Security Resolution 242 also called for an Israeli withdrawal from East Jerusalem which also was occupied in the 1967 conflict, but as history has shown the rights of the Palestinians, and the future of Jerusalem are still obstacles to be overcome if 242 was ever to be followed.⁹

U.S. POSITION

The U.S. position continues to remain that Jerusalem should be undivided with its final status negotiated. In President Carter's letter accompanying the Camp David Accords, he distinguished East Jerusalem from the rest of the occupied territories because of the unique character of Jerusalem. The Egyptian Government by contrast considered that East Jerusalem was an integral part of the West Bank with no distinctions drawn between the Palestinians in both locations. At the direct opposite end was Israel which does not use the term West Bank but rather the areas of Judea and Samaria, and in effect excludes East Jerusalem entirely.¹⁰

Historically the U.S. position dates back to 14 July 1967 when former U.N. Ambassador Arthur J. Goldberg stated that Jerusalem "must necessarily be considered in the context of a settlement of all problems arising out of the recent conflict." Ambassador Charles W. Yost went on further

to state on 1 July 1969 that "we (the United States) have consistently refused to recognize these (unilateral) measures as having anything but a provisional character and do not accept them as affecting the ultimate status of Jerusalem."¹¹ On 20 March 1980 former Secretary of State Cyrus Vance testified before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. Part of his testimony dealt with the clarification of the term undivided as it related to Jerusalem. He referred back to a 1970 Policy Statement when the term was first introduced. The concept he explained meant that there is no barbed wire between Israeli occupied East Jerusalem and West Jerusalem. The statement did not address the final political solution of the question of ultimate sovereignty. It simply spoke in terms of the physical characteristics of the city.¹²

U.N. RESOLUTION 242

U.N. Resolution 242 has served as the primary vehicle for President Reagan's initiatives to stimulate conditions that would bring Jordan and representative Palestinians into the peace process begun at Camp David. The U.S. view requires an exchange of territory for peace, and that the withdrawal clause of 242 considers all occupied territories from the 1967 war including the West Bank, Gaza, and the Golan. With the withdrawal from the Sinai in April, 1982, one of the provisions of the Camp David Accords has been already effected.) It should be further noted that Camp David does not interpret Resolution 242, however, it does caveat it by stating that the negotiations on the peace treaty between Jordan and Israel, which would define their borders, would be based on "all the provisions and principles of U.N. Security Council Resolution 242."¹³

U.N. Resolution 242 also includes several principles in addition to the Israeli withdrawal from occupied territories. These principles are: termination of all claims of belligerency, the acknowledgement of the territorial integrity, and political independence of every state in the area, and the right of all states to live in peace within secure and recognized boundaries. Camp David extended this somewhat by insisting upon the legitimate rights of the Palestinians, and their just requirements. Additionally, the security of Israel, and its Arab neighbors would be paramount during a transitional period. Lastly, the U.S. has insisted economic boycotting must be abolished, and that individual treaties should be drawn between all parties concerned.¹⁴

In 1982 the Arab states held a summit meeting in Fez, Morocco. There they resolved that an independent state be created in Gaza and the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, and in which they gave maximum focus to the Israeli withdrawal from occupied territories, and to the desires and aspirations of the Palestinians. Nowhere, however, did the summit meeting address individual peace treaties with Israel or secure borders.¹⁵ This position remains basically unchanged to this day.

The U.S. continues to support the thesis of self-government by the Palestinians (in association with Jordan); with authority over the land resources including fair safeguards on the water. Such territorial autonomy is satisfactory as long as it poses no threat to the State of Israel. Additionally the U.S. has made it clear that it would be in strong opposition of isolating the West Bank and Gaza from Israel. This is predicated upon the insistence that a comprehensive peace settle-

ment in the region must include peaceful coexistence on a socio/economic basis between the Palestinians and Israelis.¹⁶

PROPOSAL TO MOVE U.S. EMBASSY

On 23 February 1984 Senator Daniel P. Moynihan of New York proposed to the Senate Foreign Relations a bill (S.2031) to move the U.S. Embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem. (This bill was quite similar to H.R. 4877 proposed by Representative Tom Lantos of California.) Strong opposition by the Administration was raised to the move as the feeling was that such a preemptive move by the U.S. would polarize all the participants in the Middle East on both the issue of Jerusalem and the broader problems of the region.¹⁷

Ambassador Michael H. Armacost, Under Secretary for Political Affairs, testified on 21 June 1984 before the House that:

a change in the U.S. position on the status of Jerusalem we are convinced would seriously impair our ability to play a constructive role when the parties resume the search for peace. Indeed,¹⁸ it would complicate the resumption of that process.

Secretary Armacost also reiterated that the bill would be a direct interference in President Reagan's constitutional authority to conduct foreign affairs.¹⁹

With the Embassy in Tel Aviv for over 30 years it has been recognized that it does impose some handicaps in light of the fact that there are many Israeli Government offices in Jerusalem. However, the relocation would imply that the U.S. is endorsing a sovereign prerogative for Israel, and such unilateral action would be a signal to the Arab world to fan Islamic extremism.

THE COMPLEXITIES OF THE JERUSALEM PROBLEM

The realities of the Middle East are such that the issues confronting the prospects of a united Jerusalem may well be a very long way off in solving. A Harris Poll conducted amongst Americans in 1980 revealed some very interesting insights - the results of which are shown below:²⁰

TOTAL PUBLIC

| | <u>FAVOR</u> | <u>OPPOSE</u> | <u>NOT SURE</u> |
|------------------------|--------------|---------------|-----------------|
| <u>ISRAELI CONTROL</u> | 63% | 17% | 20% |

- Establishing a new system of government for Jerusalem under which the Israelis would have control of Jerusalem, but with the governing body of the Holy City being made up equally of a Jewish borough which would elect representatives of the Jewish section, and an Arab borough which would elect representatives of the Arab section, with citizens of each section and Christians, Arabs, and Jews having free access to all parts of Jerusalem.

| | | | |
|-----------------------------|-----|-----|-----|
| <u>INTERNATIONALIZATION</u> | 26% | 52% | 22% |
|-----------------------------|-----|-----|-----|

- Placing Jerusalem under international control such as the U.N. or some group of neutral nations and giving Arabs, Jews, and Christians full access to the city. Although that would mean forcing Israel to move its capital somewhere else.

| | | | |
|---|-----|-----|-----|
| <u>ARAB CONTROL OVER EAST JERUSALEM</u> | 22% | 56% | 22% |
|---|-----|-----|-----|

- Giving East Jerusalem back to Arab control, but with all Christians and Jews having access to all their Holy Places in the

city even though the city would be divided again.

Teddy Kollek, the Jewish Mayor of Jerusalem for the past 15 years has strongly advocated the principles of Israeli control and has put them into a set of four guidelines which he has pursued as an elected official - they are:²¹

1. The adherents shall administer the Holy Places with free access to all.

2. Everything possible shall be done to ensure development of the Arab way of life and to ensure Muslims and Christians a practical religious, cultural and commercial rule over their own daily activities.

3. There should be equality in providing all governmental, municipal, and social services throughout the entire city.

4. Concerted efforts must be on-going to increase cultural, social, and economic contacts amongst the inhabitants while preserving the national identity of each group.

As the Israelis devise political solutions for Jerusalem, some viewed the problems as border disputes that can be solved through demarcation lines which define absolute political jurisdictions. This concept of absolute sovereignty is impossible and at best would only serve to be counter-productive. The Arabs which have been insisting on the political partition of Jerusalem have become somewhat more conciliatory as they have shown an interest in a united municipality which at best would indicate a desire to restrict their own control.²²

Historically, the struggle for control of the Municipality dates back to 1877 at which time the mayor had always been an Arab. In

the 1930's and 40's Jerusalem continued to have an Arab Mayor, a Jewish Deputy Mayor with special status, and a Christian Deputy Mayor. The membership of the City Council was fixed at six Jews, four Muslims and two Christians. Voting areas were districted by the British. This became more solidified in 1937 when the Palestine Royal Commission appointed and headed by Lord Earl Peel recommended leaving the districting as it was with elections organized by geographical districts and ethnic registers.²³ The next major milestone was the Palestine Partition Commission (1938) which recommended that Jerusalem not be divided into two separate entities. During this period and up to the outbreak of World War II, inter-ethnic conflict prevailed for control of the Municipality. Various recommendations were made by the British over procedural ways in which to administer the city, most notably being the Fitzgerald Report (1945) and Morrison-Grady Committee (1946). In May, 1947 the United Nations Special Committee on Palestine (UNSCOP) presented its recommendations.²⁴

The U.S. supported UNSCOP's recommendations which called for Jerusalem and its environs to become a "corpus separatum" under a special international regime --- to be administered by the U.N. Jerusalem's status was to be reevaluated after ten years and its residents were to be free "to express by means of referendum their wishes as to possible modifications of the regime of the city."²⁵

The U.N. proposal was rejected by the Arab world for the internationalization of Jerusalem and fierce fighting took place within the City between the Arab Legion and Jewish forces. It was during these

battles that the Jewish Quarter, Western Wall and the site of the Holy Temple fell to the Arab Legion. Western Jerusalem was defended successfully by the Jewish forces. Various plans including those proposed by Count Folke Bernadotte called for Jerusalem to be placed under effective U.N. control. The U.S. continued to support this proposition.

While deliberations were taking place in the U.N., the Israeli Government on 2 February 1949 declared Jerusalem to be officially a part of the State. A month later, Jordan and Israel signed an agreement partitioning the City. In April 1950 Jordan annexed East Jerusalem.

The net result of all this was that Jerusalem became a fait accompli with the Western half being declared the capital of Israel, and the Eastern half as belonging to Jordan.²⁶

During the period from 1948 until 1967 Jordan it was reported violated the provisions of the 1949 Armistice Agreement which required protection of the Holy Places, and freedom of access to all religions. Reports stated that the Jordanians demolished synagogues and desecrated Jewish cemeteries. Jews of all nationalities were denied admittance to the revered Western Wall. Similarly Israeli Christians and Muslims were denied (illegally) access to their Holy Places as well.²⁷ The Arabs on the other hand both Christians and Muslims countered the argument by stating that their Holy Places at Ein Karim and the cemetery of Mamillah were subjected to similar desecration at the hands of the Israelis.²⁸

On 7 June 1967, after a series of fierce battles General Moshe Dayan declared: "The Israeli defense forces liberated Jerusalem. We have reunited the torn city, the capital of Jerusalem. We have returned to this

most sacred shrine, never to part from it again."²⁹

For some time it had been assumed that there might be religious tensions caused between the Ashkenazi Jew of Western culture and the Sephardic Jew who originally came from the Middle East or North Africa.³⁰ This fear has dissipated only to be replaced by a more direct problem - namely the fundamentalist Christians and ultra-Orthodox Jews who negate the Jewish State in its current form. Additionally there are constant confrontations between the growing Orthodox population of Jerusalem who prefer absolute exclusivity and the secular Jewish populations. Current estimates are that 30 percent of the City's population could be classified as Orthodox Jews with the possibility in years to come that Jerusalem will be composed of three cities - one Arab, one Jewish divided along the pre-1967 cease fire lines and on a north-south axis; one Orthodox and one non-Orthodox.³¹

Israel since its founding has been governed by a coalition. The two prominent parties are Labor and Likud. The Labor Party continues to be regarded as the more conservative, drawing its support from the middle and upper middle classes of European and Sabra (Israeli born) constituents. The Likud, comprised mainly of Sephardic Jews has been often classified as hawkish and right wing.³² The Likud Party Bloc at one time headed by Menahem Begin has been the prime mover in pushing Jewish settlements on the West Bank; some of which being relatively close to the Palestinian Arab settlements. This has flamed a number of incidents of violence and unrest between the Jews and Arabs in Hebron and other locations. Contributing to the unrest is Rabbi Meir Kahane who has

espoused right wing fanaticism in trying to uproot the Arabs from Israel. To the embarrassment of many Israelis, Kahane was elected to the Knesset in July, 1984.³³

What happens in Judea and Samaria has its repercussions in Jerusalem. The problem of Jerusalem only seems to be acerbated when Israel attempts to secure its borders. Secure frontiers are a basic requirement of the Jewish State and has been a major goal of the early Zionists and of late the Israel Defense Force. Israel's incapacity to abandon all the territory acquired in the 1967 War are bound up with the two great *raison d'être* of Zionism: the Jewish state and the (Law of) Return.³⁴

The Balfour Declaration of 1922 which promised the establishment of a national home for the Jews (of the Diaspora) perhaps more than any other single mandate can be credited with providing the impetus to Zionism as a pioneering movement and national resolve. The Law of Return provided automatic citizenship to any Jew in search of a homeland. The modern Jewish State in effect evolved into its present form as a result of these driving forces. In recent years as the Israelis expanded into the occupied territories political commentators have regarded this forward expansion as being racist in nature because of the exclusive nature in which this nationalistic nature is applied. The Israelis have defended their actions as being pure nationalism and refuted the label racism as a canard.

POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS TO THE JERUSALEM PROBLEM

LAND POLICY

Mayor Teddy Kollek sees the psychological strain between a majority

(Jews) and a minority (Arabs) as an ever present problem with a minor grievance becoming a grudge, and a major achievement taken for granted. The Arab community he believes must receive clear-cut and definite assurances. He also suggests that the Israeli government issue a land policy declaration that no additional land will be compulsorily purchased for Jewish housing, thereby removing a major source of tension. The present municipal expansion plans call for a ceiling of 700,000 in the next 20 years. Both populations would be free to grow to their respective numbers in order to achieve this total.³⁵

MUNICIPAL ADMINISTRATION

Since 1967 there has been a proposal on the books to divide the city into boroughs under one central body in order to give municipal autonomy to the Arab population. Support however, from both sides has been lacking. The main opposition to the plan stems from Israeli unwillingness to introduce the necessary legislation because of the fear that Jerusalem might be set apart from other Israeli cities in the overall context of administration. The Arab population fears that borough districting would lead to a division of the city with boundaries going back to the 1967 famous green line.³⁶ Mayor Kollek has suggested a structure under which the city would be governed by boroughs modeled on the boroughs of London.³⁷ This concept, as previously noted, received favorable support in the U.S.

Another proposal for governing the city is the creation of a local council which would include only insensitive areas of Arab East Jerusalem. The Jewish neighborhoods in the outlying areas would be

organized into similar councils which would deal with their municipal and community problems until their major fears have diminished; subsequently additional councils would be created as time progressed. The overall municipal council still would exist and hopefully with Arab participation. Until a satisfactory political solution is reached on the West Bank issues it is unlikely that there would be much Arab involvement.³⁸

SOVEREIGNTY

President Sadat wrote President Carter on September 17, 1978 that

The Palestinian inhabitants of Arab Jerusalem are entitled to exercise their legitimate national rights, being³⁹ part of the Palestinian people in the West Bank.

The above statement has very profound meaning. Statistically the Arabs in Jerusalem comprise more than 10 percent of the electorate of the West Bank and Gaza. They know that they can never establish autonomy without the support of the West Bank Palestinians. The Israelis regard Arab autonomy more as a question of residency than territorial holdings, and fear the encroachment of new Arab settlements. Just recently it was reported in the New York Times that "Jewish settlers on the occupied West Bank are threatening civil disobedience and even civil war if Prime Minister Shimon Peres dares to negotiate any exchange of territory with Jordan."⁴⁰ Alfred L. Atherton, Jr. Former Assistant Secretary of State for Near East and South Asia observed that the pursuit of peace for Israel is "recognizing that the choice is between retaining exclusive control of the occupied West Bank, Gaza and Golan Heights which in my

view will render a stable Middle East peace unattainable for the indefinite future - or working toward a solution which accepts the basic concept of "territory for peace" embodied in Resolution 242."⁴¹ The basic problem to achieving a just solution of course is to convene a conference in Geneva between King Hussein of Jordan, Prime Minister Peres and moderate Palestinians (approved in principle by Yasir Arafat). Additionally other Arab countries such as Syria and Egypt might wish to take part. More than likely Israel would ask for U.S. involvement in support of the conference. It can be anticipated that the Russians also would have to be involved in order to assist in bringing the PLO to the negotiation table. It is interesting to note that the Russians were involved in 1973 when a decision was reached to withdraw Israeli troops from the Sinai. Most recently Prime Minister Peres has exhibited a rapprochement towards Moscow,⁴² perhaps demonstrating an eagerness to involve the USSR in the Middle East peace process. The Prime Minister also recognizes that the Soviet Jewish community while being sympathetic to Israel cannot express its sentiments because of the adverse relationship between Israel and the USSR.

TEMPLE MOUNT

Since 1967 the Muslim Council has in effect controlled the Mosques and all but one of the gates to the Mount. Law and order are maintained by a contingent of the Israeli police force composed of Muslim and Christian Arabs. Jewish public prayers have been forbidden in the entire area by religious decree and for the safety of the worshippers.⁴³ There are numerous proposals on the books to devise a long term solution

the most plausible being a form of Vaticanization under which an international agreement would establish the responsibilities of the Muslim institution, and the principles of "individual sovereignty" under the Israeli Law. The effect of this would reduce Israeli control and grant total immunity within Muslim Law.⁴⁴

OTHER NOTABLE ISSUES

Lord Caradon in his argument sees internationalization of the city under the aegis of the U.N. as the best possible solution for the future. He envisions an Israeli Jerusalem and an Arab Jerusalem with no barriers both acting in respect as sister cities. Israel would enjoy the security it has long sought, and the Palestinians would be free of occupied troops. Idealistically the Holy Places would be easily accessible to anyone who wished to worship.⁴⁵ Supporting this thesis are the National Council of Churches and the Roman Catholic Church with the former calling for the return of East Jerusalem to Jordan and the establishment of an international presence in the Holy City to protect the holy shrines. The World Jewish community opposed this plan in its totality in spite of the fact that these issues were clearly articulated by the U.N. on 4 July and 22 November 1967 including the basic American position that the peace settlement must not reflect the weight of conquest.⁴⁶ Mayor Kollek supports the argument that the argument espoused by the Vatican has been long since overtaken by events, and that an international body would only complicate matters. From his perspective the Municipal Government has made tremendous progress in keeping the Holy Sites open to visitation, and that each of the religious bodies tend to their own

affairs without outside intervention.⁴⁷ It certainly stands to reason therefore that if a system is working to the general satisfaction of most parties it would be unwise to institute sweeping reforms that would otherwise tend to delay forward progress.

The Municipal Government has been instrumental in another major area of contention namely the education of the Arab population. The curriculum from the seventh grade on is identical to that of Jordan, and the schools are supervised by the West Bank Education Council which is in accordance with Jordanian Law. This situation has proven to be satisfactory to both sides.⁴⁸

The Municipal Government also is making strides in health care and other quality of life areas for the Arab population, and permits the Arab Chamber of Commerce to foster closer ties for the economic institutions of East Jerusalem, and the West Bank inhabitants. This same organization acting as the Jordanian consulate in Jerusalem helps to keep the vital link between East Jerusalem, the West Bank and Jordan alive and flourishing.⁴⁹

As Israel slowly works out the many problems of the City, a much broader problem still looms overhead and could lead to serious consequences in years to come for the State.

With the Arabs showing some willingness to meet Israel at the negotiation table, Israel should take full advantage of this turn in events, for after years of bitter fighting, it appears that the Arab World may be slowly accepting the State of Israel as a fait accompli. Negotiations would be a long and arduous task with Israel no doubt having

to make concessions of worth to the Arab countries.

It should be noted that when the question of Jerusalem is finally put on the table, the issue remains solely between Israel and Jordan. Should a treaty be signed between Prime Minister Shimon Peres and King Hussein; it is quite predictable that there would be anti-Jordanian retaliation by the other Muslim States. Perhaps the best solution for the current time frame is for both sides to sign a declaration of non-belligerence. At least it would give both sides precious time to sort out their differences over the rule of the West Bank. King Hussein also would have to disengage himself from the PLO which would (obviously) not go along with any such arrangement.

As the clock moves, Israel has learned that the price of occupation is very costly both in terms of their economic plight and unpopular world opinion. At the same time the Jordanian King has been beset by disappointment and pitfalls in his quest to bring a negotiated settlement to the region. Against this stage is the historical fact that while Yasser Arafat demands the creation of a secular democratic state it has been generally rejected as a euphemism for the destruction of Israel.⁵⁰ History has shown also that most Israeli Muslims have fared much better under Israeli rule than the period when the Jordanians occupied the area.

Just recently in what appears to be a peace-making move, Zafer el-Masri, a Palestinian was elected Mayor of Nablus, a city on the West Bank. Other possibilities include the cities of Ramallah, Hebron and el-Bireh as having Palestinians appointed as Mayors.⁵¹

THE FUTURE

Since its founding as a State, the U.S. commitment to Israel has been unswerving. However, recent indicators have shown that the United States and many West European countries are reducing their political support for Israel over the fear that this small and heroic country could drag the World into a new conflagration.⁵² Acts of terrorism on international carriers, the war in Lebanon and other border skirmishes all seem to be pointed directly or indirectly at the undeclared Arab-Israeli War. Many Americans are also questioning the rationale for the U.S. Foreign Policy and whether special interest groups are shaping the policy. Nevertheless, a solid 40-50 percent of the American public remains sympathetic to Israel. It should be noted also that there has been an increase in public sympathy for the Arabs over the past 10 years but it has not come at the expense of Israel. Currently the polls show about a 12 percent figure in support of the Arab countries.⁵³

The future status of Jerusalem, as we have discussed, depends upon the settlements that will be reached on the West Bank peace initiatives, which today appears to have a greater chance for positive results than anytime since 1967. Suggestions to demilitarize the West Bank of all troops (less a municipal police force of combined Palestinians and Israelis) has interesting possibilities. The security of Israel's borders is always a major consideration, and one in which the U.S. has continued to show a very active interest. Through a selective process, which at times has been quite delicate, the U.S. continues to supply weaponry and technical manpower to the friendly states in

the region in order to develop a proper balance of forces, as well as signaling the Russians, and other potential aggressors that it will provide protection against external threats.

Jerusalem, poetically described as the City of Gold because of the warm radiant glow it exudes will only reach nirvana if the protagonists both are willing to make whatever sacrifices are necessary to bring peace to this volatile region of the World.

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FOOTNOTES

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